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Centennial Bonus Units on Other Women and Foreign Reviews

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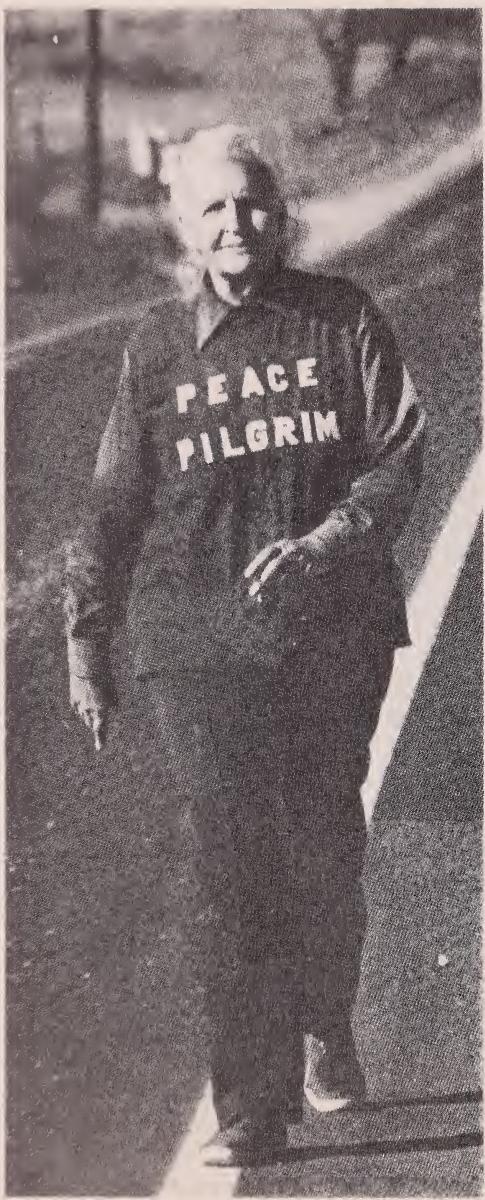
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Centennial Tribute to Other Women

In 1984 the idea occurred to feature several women, remarkable in their own ways, during the centennial death year of Emily Dickinson. She, of course, will be remembered in many ways in 1986 by universities, the Folger Library in early May for two days, presses, and poetry readers worldwide. Rev. Niels Kjaer of Denmark has an INFORMATION issue of ten pages available. (See N & Q section of this issue, foreign section for further details) But there are many women, equally remarkable, who will be bypassed this year. The women's movement is helping resurrect the memory of hundreds of women who gave their all to feminism and life generally; LEGACY magazine is concentrating on 19th century American women of letters. Let this unit be a pebble lodged in the morass of history, in Robert Frost's terms.

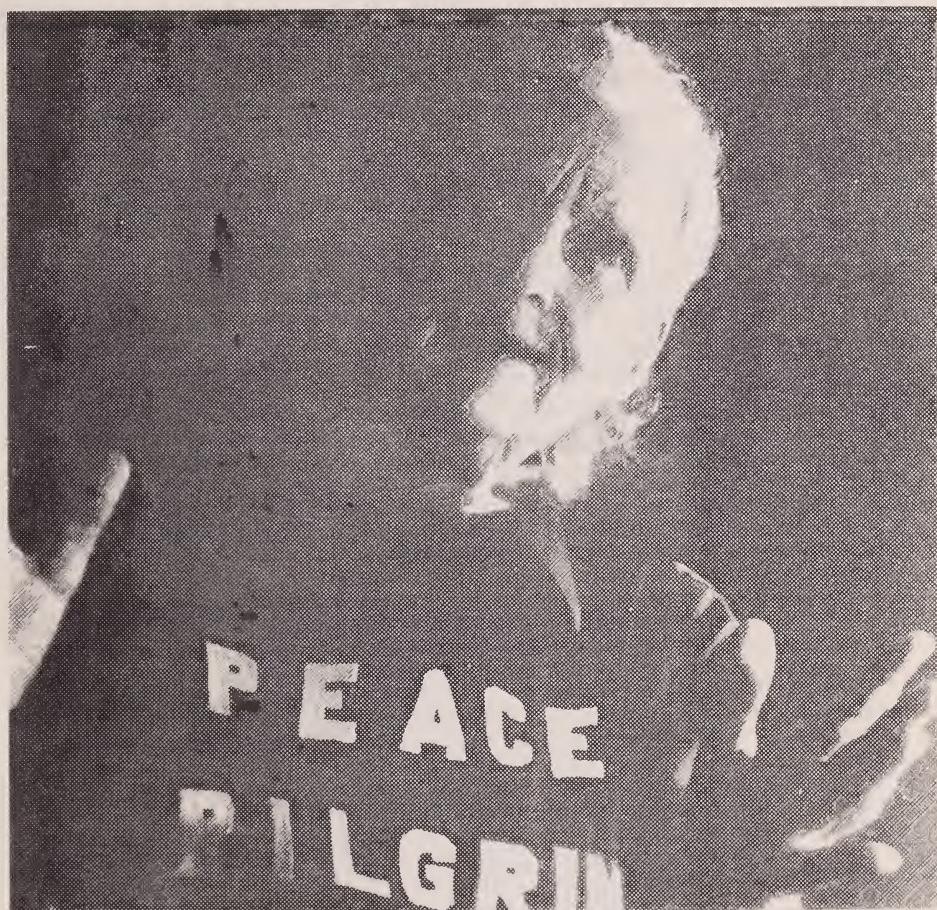
The first woman who seemed worthy to include in this unit was Peace Pilgrim, her only name for a quarter of a century. She gave up all her possessions, her name, and her age in 1953 when she left Los Angeles to become a full time pacifist. She traveled the U.S.A. from coast to coast five times, adding a year each time she crossed the continent, wending from north to south as much as possible. The friends she made on each trip added to the length of her stays: speaking engagements on world and inner peace were added annually until she was booked somewhere almost daily. She died July 7, 1981, on the road, being driven by a friend from one speaking engagement to another. That was tragic, yet appropriate, as her life had been a tramp for peace until death.

The editor heard her in Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C., the summer of 1977. She addressed a Sunday school group of fifty at the church. Several of the members had met her on previous visits, and a few had kept in touch with her. Her sister in New Jersey served as her letter drop for years. The introduction to her posthumous book PEACE PILGRIM: her life and work in her own words, compiled by some of her friends—will serve as a fragile background to her life and purpose. 198 pp. Paper. Available, free from Friends of Peace Pilgrim, 43480 Cedar Avenue, Hemet, California 92344. Other free items include a little booklet, which was available for many years during Peace's pilgrimage. For a price, there is a cassette tape made from several of her talks. Enquire of above address.

Introducing Peace Pilgrim

YOU MAY SEE HER walking through your town or along the highway — a silver-haired woman dressed in navy blue slacks and shirt, and a short tunic with pockets all around the bottom in which she carries her only worldly possessions. It says "PEACE PILGRIM" in white letters on the front of the tunic and "25,000 Miles On Foot for Peace" on the back. She has walked the 25,000 miles. However, she continues to walk, for her vow is, "I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace, walking until I am given shelter and fasting until I am given food." She walks without a penny in her pockets and she is not affiliated with any organization. She walks as a prayer and as a chance to inspire others to pray and work with her for peace. She speaks to individuals along the way, to gatherings such as church groups or college groups, through newspapers, magazines, radio, television—relating interesting and meaningful experiences, discussing peace within and without. She feels we have learned that war is not the way to peace—that security does not lie in stockpiles of bombs. She points out that this is a crisis period in human history, and that we who live in the world today must choose between a nuclear war of annihilation and a golden age of peace. Although she does not ask to see results, thousands of letters testify that her journey has not been in vain—saying, in effect, "Since talking with you I've decided that I should be doing something for peace also."

(This message was printed on a brief leaflet, a few copies of which Peace Pilgrim carried in her tunic in order to introduce herself.)



photograph by Carla Anette

I am a pilgrim, a wanderer. I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace, walking until I am given shelter and fasting until I am given food.

— Peace Pilgrim

Besides Peace Pilgrim, who was traveling like a Buddhist monk without the begging bowl, there are others who will be featured here briefly: Geraldine Ferraro, Catherine Pollard the first woman scoutmaster, Esther Peterson the consumer advocate, Mary Lewis Chapman a bibliophile and supporter of ED, the von Medem family of the Napoleonic era, and book reviews on Wendy Martin, Betty Friedan, and the Alice Toklas--Gertrude Stein family.

Let's begin with a man, however, Col. Thomas W. Higginson, that female supporter of the 19th century. As a supporter of black and women's rights for decades, he should be honored somehow in the Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York. I wrote a letter to that effect in 1984, but no answer was forthcoming. Similarly if there were a black hall of fame, Higginson, John Brown, and a few other whites should be remembered. It is understandable that the minorities do not want outsiders to share their glory when the minority has been covered up and suppressed for years. If there is justice for the one, there should be justice eventually for the other who helped make it possible.

In 1984, Geraldine Ferraro during her campaign for the Vice Presidency made a speech that all minorities, including women, are interdependent. Their needs can be met fully only in a salad bowl analogy, not a melting pot one. Martin Luther King's birthday holiday also can be built on by the minorities, as the black tactics for equal recognition were forerunners of women's movement, gay rights, the disabled, the elderly, and all down the line.

Interesting, as this is being typed, today is January 15, King's birthday. The holiday will not be observed officially until next Monday, according to Congress, but the whole week will be filled with media publicity. Bishop Tutu is in the country for many of the events in Washington, Atlanta, and other places. He attended the installation of the new Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., Bishop Edmond Browning of Hawaii; he also addressed the student body at Johns Hopkins University while here. The South African Apartheid policy seems a "tough nut to crack", but the World Council of Churches is fully behind the attack. Many of King's tactics are being used. But that is a story in itself.

Lady scoutmasters? Be prepared!

The Boy Scouts of America got a rude awakening last year when one of their long-time volunteers blew the bugle on the organization to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. The complaint? Sex discrimination, says scoutmaster Catherine Pollard.

She has been fighting for the title of scoutmaster ever since Troop 13 in Milford was disbanded because no man was available to lead it. Pollard had been *de facto* scoutmaster of the troop for four years. She applied for the job but was rejected on the

grounds that "it takes a man to build character."

Pollard's response? "Baloney, a woman can teach character as well as a man." Last December, the Commission agreed and ordered the Boy Scouts to offer Pollard a commission as scoutmaster. The organization is appealing the decision.

Pollard maintains the real victims are the boys of Troop 13 and vows to take the matter all the way to the Supreme Court, which means she and the Boy Scouts will be tied up in legal knots for a long time to come. ■



Modern Maturity April-May 1984

PHILIP H. KENN

Mrs. Esther Peterson interviewed on the consumer movement.
 Reprinted by permission from the WASHINGTON POST,
 Sunday, March 17, 1985, p. D4.

Q How did you get involved at first in the consumer movement?

A I guess I got involved through my husband. I had been raised in a very tight Republican family. He was a socialist—a Norman Thomas socialist. He began taking me to meetings and factories and slums, and hearing all the great speakers of those periods, my eyes were opened a little bit. Then I went to Boston because he was going to Harvard, and I started to volunteer in the church again. And he said "do something different, Esther."

So, I volunteered at the YWCA, and I got assigned to the industrial department of the Y . . . and that's when I worked for the Consumers League for Fair Labor Standards. And that's where I met Mrs. [Eleanor] Roosevelt and learned that you could use your purchasing power to help direct social policy.

Q Carter gave you the task of securing legislation that would create an independent consumer agency, with power to intervene on behalf of the consumer before federal agencies and the courts. Why do you think you were unable to accomplish that task? Is it true, as Ralph Nader says, that in the end, it was Carter's fault?

A No, I disagree with him on that. It was the great power of the big corporations. They organized the Business Roundtable, one of the strongest anticonsumer lobbies that

has ever been assembled. And they were powerful. And don't think I didn't meet them in the corridor—"Esther, . . . we are going to lick you." . . .

I think that Carter's dealing on the Hill was not all that I would have liked. And I'm the first to criticize that. . . . I wish to hell I would have been able to handle it myself, the way I would have liked to have handled it. Because I know how to get a bill through Congress.

Q You're 78 years old, and you're still active in the consumer movement. What motivates you to stay involved after all this time?

A Well, I love it when people come to me and ask me to do things, like when I heard from someone in Venezuela who said that he had heard that Reagan had canceled certain programs. He asked, "Do you think we can get Mrs. Peterson to help us?" And that means a lot to me because, at my stage of the game, I don't want to go out and find make-work for Esther. I love being asked to be useful. I think I learned from Mrs. Roosevelt that you've got to be concerned and useful—otherwise, you just wither. And I don't want to wither.

And then I see all these things to be done. I think our work has made a difference. I think we're going to get the international consumer guidelines. It's not everything we want, but it's never been that way in my life, anyway. Everything is compromised. Mrs. Roosevelt used to say "now remember, you have to compromise—but compromise upwards."



"What are politics if not women?"—Talleyrand

Anna-Dorothea von Medem, grand duchess of Courland, a Baltic principality, was one of the most glamorous political figures of the Napoleonic era. Known as "the divine Anna" and "the Courland Venus," she was on intimate terms with everyone worth knowing in central and eastern Europe.

A shrewd politician, she managed both to use and to keep at bay the Russian czar to whom she owed fealty. Her Parisian gowns and carefully maintained beauty did much to win over Alexander I and others, whose political favors she had to court. After becoming the mistress and confidante of Talleyrand, France's powerful foreign minister, she shared in his decision-making and through her social contacts and charm helped him to further his ambitions. She wielded as much political influence as any woman of her time could—except for a queen.

Anna's oldest daughter, Wilhelmina, duchess of Sagan, shared her mother's zest for political power. She became the mistress—

and obsession—of Metternich, Austria's great statesman. "You understand our problems far better than any of my ministers," he wrote her. Anna's youngest daughter, Dorothea, duchess of Dino, became Talleyrand's devoted companion and, according to rumor, the mother of his child. At one crucial point during the Congress of Vienna, the sisters' influence on Metternich and Talleyrand may have altered the course of modern European history.

A book on the above women has been published by Rosalynd Pflaum, entitled BY INFLUENCE AND DESIRE. 15 black and white illustrations, endpaper maps, bibliography, index. Published at \$17.95. Available thru Book of the Month Club at \$3. cheaper. All this information is reprinted by permission from the BOMC News.

Mary Lewis Chapman

Born on Long Island, New York, Mary Lewis moved with her family to Williamsburg at age 16, and rerooted there with the tenacity of Boston ivy. While pursuing a degree in history from the College of William and Mary, she showed visitors around her new home, attired in old-fashioned costume, and helped her father with his stamp and coin shop. After college she taught school, raised horses, married, adopted a daughter -- and initiated a newsletter called "Literary Sketches" which is still going strong after more than twenty years.

Mary Lewis is a bibliophile in its purest form, and this love for reading was to lead her into book-selling later on. "Literary Sketches" made many friends for her in England, and with correspondence came curiosity. Eventually she and her husband traveled to Great Britain for a literary tour, the first of five they conducted for literature buffs, dogging famous homes and gravestones from London to Edinburgh.

Even earlier she had sought such monuments to American writers, as when in 1971 she and her husband had wanted to visit the home of Thomas Wolfe "somewhere in Ashville, North Carolina", yet couldn't find tourist information. When at last they stood at Wolfe's door, they found it locked for a two-hour lunch break. Frustration led her to seek out a guidebook to literary homes and shrines, but when a thorough search uncovered no such publication, she wrote one herself. Literary Landmarks was published in 1974 and went out-of-print after 2,000 copies sold.

"I'm sure I made this subject popular," Mary Lewis smiles, assuring me that literary guides are now available ("but not mine"), including an enormous Oxford illustrated edition ("It won't fit in your glove compartment").



The foregoing sketch was written by Mrs. Chapman's daughter in her absence in England, summer of 1984. The whole version can be found in LITERARY SKETCHES, July--August, 1984 issue.

[ED and Bright's Disease]
by Olivia Murray Nichols
Dallas, Texas

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In matters of literary speculation, truth is not always stranger than fiction. Why was Emily Dickinson, the nineteenth century poet, a recluse? As a girl, she was a fun-loving prankster. In her twenties, she began a gradual withdrawing from society. By the time she was forty she became a woman of mystery.

For over a century scholars and literary gossips have blamed her eccentricities on a domineering father or unrequited love or failing eyesight. None of these "reasons," however, justify certain details in her curious behavior, such as the fact that in her later years she wore only white dresses and carried bouquets of flowers even in her home.

Like the purloined letter, the truth about Emily Dickinson may be found in plain sight.

It has never been a secret that she was a victim of Bright's Disease (nephritis), a kidney disorder, which in advanced stages causes excessive urination and offensive body odors.

The cause of nephritis is unknown, although Richard Bright, the British physician who first identified the malady in 1827, blamed childhood diseases which create exposure to "some . . . cause of habitual source of suppressed perspiration." Early symptoms include lethargy; headaches; increased secretion of urine often smelling of ammonia; puffiness, dry skin, and pain in the lower abdomen. Advanced nephritis is marked by bladder incontinence and even diarrhea. Today the disease can be controlled, but not cured, by steroids. No such drugs existed for Emily Dickinson. Therefore, in the prescribed treatments available to her we find likely reasons for her so-called "eccentricities."

Dr. George Johnson, in *On the Diseases of the Kidney* (1852), described the physical appearance of the patient as having "a dry and harsh state of the skin [and] a peculiar pallid or sallow colour of the skin and lips." Helen Hunt Jackson, after a visit to Emily in 1876, wrote of her concern that her friend had lived too much away from the sunlight: "You look so white and mothlike. Your hand felt like such a wisp in mine that you frightened me." As a matter of fact, Emily did not "live away from the sunlight." Her own interests and energies, as well as medical advice to exercise in the fresh air, kept her in the garden behind the high hedges surrounding her father's home whenever New England weather allowed.

Emily Dickinson did not become a recluse over night, a fact that illustrates the progressive stages of Bright's Disease. Her childhood was happy and normal. She grew up in a family of parents, sister Lavinia, and brother Austin. She had numerous relatives, most of them close by geography and fellowship. She had playmates and school friends, many of whom remained regular correspondents throughout her lifetime. Her father was strict but never overbearing. Emily respected him, as a child of her time would have been taught to do, but she felt free to joke about his ideas and family regulations in her letters.

As a young girl Emily attended Amherst Academy in her home town. Later she went to Mt. Holyoke Seminary in South Hadley, Mass., where, like boarding school pupils everywhere, she delighted in pranks against her teachers and fellow students.

She was a rebel of sorts, who, though believing in a God of Love, stood up to the school's founder and head mistress, Mary Lyon, who would have all of her charges publicly "converted" to religious orthodoxy.

Emily Dickinson was a good student, proficient in literature, composition, and the sciences. Reluctantly, therefore, she withdrew from Mt. Holyoke in her second term because of her health. Although she did not tell her parents she had difficulty recovering from a cold, someone else did. As she wrote to one of her friends, "Mother thinks me not able to confine myself to school this term. She had rather I would exercise, and I can assure you I get plenty of that article by staying at home. I am going to learn to make bread tomorrow."

For the next few years, Emily maintained a conventional home and social life, attending family gatherings and parties with various young men from Am-

herst College. Not until after her mid-twenties did her activities abate to the point that her friends became aware she was withdrawing from them. A full fifteen years later, in 1869, when she was thirty-nine years old, she told Col. Thomas Higginson, her "preceptor" and editor, "I do not cross my father's ground to any house or town."

A gregarious, happy young woman, who had once boasted playfully to a girl friend that she intended someday to be the belle of Amherst, does not change into a shy eremite except in cases of extreme mental upheavals, which has been suggested by some of her biographers. But her letters written during the years of this progressive withdrawal reveal no evidence of depression or dementia, nor proof of a romantic heartbreak. Rather than a personality change, there is evidence that by this time Bright's Disease was obviously moving toward its more serious chronic symptoms. In the mid-1800's, there were few public rest rooms, and even the finest homes had outdoor toilets and indoor chamberpots. A young lady subject to bladder incontinence and possible diarrhea had no choice but to stay close to home.

For a while, however, Emily continued to take part in a few social functions. Annually, her father, as a trustee of Amherst College, entertained the graduating class with a commencement reception at which he expected all his children to act as co-hosts. Emily fulfilled this obligation for as long as her father lived, though the prospect became more and more agonizing to her as the years went by. In 1860 she wrote to her friend Mrs. J.G. Holland, "That you will be with me annuls fears and I await Commencement with . . . resignation." In the years following, Emily made only token appearances at the reception. One of the guests, John Burgess, wrote in 1867, "She seemed more like an apparition than a reality. At a moment when the conversation lagged a little, she would sweep in, clad in immaculate white, pass through the rooms silently curtesyng and saluting left and right, and sweep out again."

For the most part, the Dickinson family was tolerant of Emily's seclusion, evidence that the cause was understandable to them and of a nature unnecessary to be justified or explained. Lavinia refused to insist that Emily go out when a friend urged her to do so, saying "Why should I? She is content as she is."

Congressman,
~~XXXXXX~~

During Mr. Dickinson's term as a United States Congressman, he invited his wife, son, and Lavinia to visit him in Washington, adding, "And Emily too, if she will, but I will not insist upon her coming." On another occasion, when the entire family had been asked to dine with friends, Mr. Dickinson accepted for himself, Mrs. Dickinson, Austin, and Lavinia, but said that Emily no longer went away from home. Such a reply, without apology, indicates that Edward Dickinson, far from being the autocratic figure he is sometimes depicted to be, was a father who refused to force his daughter into an uncomfortable or embarrassing position.

The more Emily "hid" behind the hedge, the more her myth grew. Adding to the mystery was the fact that sometime after the mid-1860's she dressed only in white. Impish children, sneaking around to spy on her, and legitimate family guests, seeing the plump little figure dart furtively down a hallway remarked about the ghostliness of the lady in white. Not even the dress-maker, a local woman who annually spent a week in the Dickinson home sewing for the ladies, could shed any light on the mystery. When other clients questioned her about her work in the house behind the hedge, she could tell them only that Miss Emily was never available for fittings so the white dresses were made according to Lavinia's measurements.

Most of Emily Dickinson's biographers consider her preference for white merely a part of her dramatic pose. On the contrary, her dress was determined by the conditions of her health. She wore white clothing because it was sanitary. Joseph Edwards, who, in 1881, five years before Emily's death, published *How a Person Threatened with Bright's Disease Ought to Live*, related treatment to proper wearing apparel. "The skin takes the place of pumps in the leaky ship," Edwards wrote. "Anything that interferes with the free action of the skin will impress the kidneys unfavorably . . . A large amount of water is daily thrown out through the pores of the skin and in the water is a certain amount of urea. . . . The clothing worn next to the skin should be of a porous texture because it will absorb water as it is given out." White clothing, therefore, was part of the "prescription." It was also more practical for the contemporary boiling-and-bleaching methods of laundry and sterilization.

In addition to John Burgess, other Dickinson guests remarked about the white dresses, and some told of seeing Emily with large bouquets of flowers in her arms, even inside the house. Biographers ascribe the bouquets to a nature-lover's theatrics. Bright's Disease, however, suggests a more pragmatic explanation. A fastidious young Victorian, without benefit of twentieth-century deodorants, used whatever natural fragrances were available to mask any possible offensive aroma of urea or its accompanying ammonia smell.

It was this fear of body odors which explains the most curious of Emily's behavior patterns. It was one thing to refuse to appear in public for fear of embarrassing herself because of her uncontrollable physical problems, but it was more difficult to avoid face-to-face encounters with the family's visitors. On occasion, even Emily received guests. Col. Higginson came to Amherst to discuss her poems. Helen Hunt Jackson visited her, and so did Samuel Bowles, editor of the *Springfield Republican*, although once when she refused to see him, he shouted up the stairs, "Emily, you damned rascal! No more of this nonsense. I've travelled all the way from Springfield to see you. Come down at once." She came.

But her next door neighbor, Mabel Loomis Todd, tried unsuccessfully for fifteen years to meet Emily Dickinson. Mrs. Todd and Lavinia were friends for years, until they went to court over ownership of a piece of land. On Emily's death, Mrs. Todd helped Lavinia edit the poems they found in packets in the bedroom. She also collected and published Emily's letters. But during the years of Emily's life, whenever Mrs. Todd visited Lavinia, Emily ducked into her room. On numerous occasions when Mrs. Todd, an accomplished musician, played the Dickinson piano, Emily sat in the hall outside the spacious drawing room to listen. At the concert's end, she disappeared. Later, to express her appreciation of the music, she sent cakes or poems to her neighbor. Mrs. Todd has described her own reactions to Emily's elusive behavior:

I can never forget the twilight seclusion of the old drawing room . . . and Emily just outside the door, her dress a spot of white in the dim hall . . . At first it seemed to me as if a

visitor from another world had alighted for a time, wishing, for some inscrutable reason, to be entertained on a foreign planet. Later, it became not only natural, but so much a habit that I should have missed my solitary recitals quite as much as my often invisible auditor.

What reason would Emily have for avoiding direct communication with her sister's friend, except her fear of embarrassment? True, so close a friend should have fallen into the category of "member of the household." Emily was not evasive around her immediate family or the servants. Ignoring or avoiding a neighbor altogether might be ascribed to an egocentric quirk, but the act of listening from the hallway as though she dared not be part of the festive society is a pathetic reminder of what Bright's Disease did to Emily Dickinson emotionally and socially as well as physically.

The myth that Emily was a recluse because of a broken heart can be challenged on many points. Indeed, the sentimental Mrs. Loomis was an early instigator of the rumors concerning Emily's "tragic" love interests, much as girls in parochial schools ascribe romances to their teacher-nuns. Emily probably did have a school girl's crush on the Rev. Charles Wadsworth well beyond the age she could be called a girl, but according to letters exchanged with their mutual friends, her curiosity indicated she knew very little about him. The infatuation, therefore, can hardly be called even a one-sided love affair.

She may have had an "understanding" with her father's friend Judge Otis Lord, but if there had been an engagement, it was contracted well after she had begun to withdraw from society. Other gentlemen friends had wives with whom she corresponded as prolifically as with the husbands. Even suggestions of lesbian attraction for her friend Kate Anton can be dispelled on the grounds of the contemporary convention of effusive diction in letters and conversation among friends.

A recent explanation for her seclusion because of badly deteriorating eyesight is not without foundation. According to Dr. Martin Wand, a Connecticut ophthalmologist, Emily Dickinson also suffered from exotropia, a malalignment of her eyes. In existing records, including her letters, there is evidence that she and her family sought medical help from a number of eye doctors at home and in Boston. Certainly, failing eyesight might bring about a change in her formal education and even in her social life over a period of time. But she did not confine herself constantly to a darkened room. Until the last winter of her life, she spent hours in the sunshine of her yard. In any case, poor eyesight and illegible handwriting would not account for white dresses and deodorizing bouquets, nor for human communication only on the other side of the parlor wall. Blindness is nothing to be embarrassed by. Even in Victorian times, failing eyesight could be explained to sympathetic guests and hosts. In all modesty, symptoms and results of Bright's Disease could not.

- *Olivia Murray Nichols* -
Dallas, Texas

Wendy Martin. AN AMERICAN TRPTYCH. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1984. x, 272 p., 24 cm.

_____. THE AMERICAN SISTERHOOD. New York: Harper & Row, 1972. ix, 373 p. Illus. 24 cm.

The first book concerns not only Emily Dickinson, but two other prominent American women poets, Anne Bradstreet and Adrienne Rich. Each woman has about a third of the book, hence the title Triptych. The emphasis of this review will be on Dickinson, but readers must be alerted that the entire book is worth reading. This is the most thoro study of Anne Bradstreet I have encountered, one long overdue her; a similar study should be undertaken for Phyllis Wheatley, the black American woman poet. After finishing the book, one has the impression that the first two women in the book were merely brought in to show the contrast which women's liberation has provided for Adrienne Rich, who has opted for a radical lesbian lifestyle after rearing three sons.

Wendy Martin assumes a moderate feminist position for both Dickinson and Bradstreet, similar to Edith Toegel's book on Emily and Annette von Droste-Hulshoff, a 19th century German poet. (That book will be reviewed in DS soon) Mention should be made here of Martin's earlier book, THE AMERICAN SISTERHOOD, which is an anthology of writings of the feminist movement from colonial times to the present. For those who are interested in feminism, as Col. Higginson was, Martin is a rewarding, learned writer. Her scholarship extends thru several decades on the subject.

The first two poets in the book are not seen as radical feminists because women were so thoroly submerged and prosecuted for out--of--line conduct. Dickinson and Bradstreet both presented themselves as targets not worth shooting at. One of the main points of Martin is that Dickinson had no system of beliefs. She quotes Porter, Diehl, Homans, and Keller to show indeterminacy and oxymorons galore. These oxymorons can imply a resolution such as Tai--chi or a mystic day, which is strictly organized, like the seasons of the year. On page 83 Martin mentions such a cycle, which would be progressive and teleological. Still, it is true that Dickinson did not attempt to make all her poems fit snugly on any Procrustean bed.

Friendships with women were the lifelines that permitted her to descend into her emotional depths, exploring the discontinuities and contradictions. The male authority figures filled another function for her. In her crises of self-doubt, she turned to the males repeatedly, only to find eventually she must save herself. She is compared with Thoreau for preferring the personal touch to

industrialism and materialism, which is really par for Melville, Hawthorne, and Emerson also. She admired Wordsworth and Shelley for their innocence of childhood, perhaps adopting her little girl persona from them.

Encroaching on Barton St. Armond's area of Victorian culture, Martin surveys Dickinson's favorite pastimes: sewing, playing the piano, reading widely from the classics and current magazines down to the Sentimental Love Religion novels, and cultivating her greenhouse and garden. Her adult stance is seen as a bifurcation: either a begging, insignificant child or an imperious queen. A middle position might be established for the lover whom Martin investigates at some length. Martin settles for Bowles, with Dickinson as one of his several mistresses. Maria Whitney has been mentioned for decades as a counterpart of Dickinson, with whom she was a reliable correspondent. Both were stunned at Bowles' death. Josiah Holland delivered an elegy at Bowles' funeral to this effect: the women whom he loved and who loved him were good women, of the highest intellectual grade. With all this background, Martin relegates the Master letters to Dickinson's imagination ! Here she is not alone, as many scholars believe the three letters were never sent to anyone.

Search for self is an encroachment on the work of Abha Agrawal (India, 1977). More scholars are realizing that Dickinson's chief purpose in writing was to explore her consciousness and to chronicle her inner life. She was free of the necessity to polarize subject and object, achieving a non-duality experience. She lived in eternity every moment. Martin claims that Transcendentalism is not Dickinson's belief: God, earth, and she were equal and separate worlds.

Emerson and Dickinson are given considerable space in comparison. He is summed up as linear and she as holistic. (pp. 121-22). Thus they represent two modes of consciousness, Emerson the left side of the brain, and Dickinson the right. In following Emerson's advice to abandon oneself to the nature of things, Dickinson concentrated on the encompassing periphery: always the actual and the present, so that Jung's mother container was gradually drawn around her rather than a perfect circle, which Emerson promoted. Dickinson emphasized nurture and cooperation, not control by the will; the earthiness of the present moment was what her self devolved on time and again. The periphery became her circumference, life's comprehensive pattern, similar to the Great Chain of Being [the last phrase is my conclusion].

A comparison with Walt Whitman is interesting, in that they are seen as similar to Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott: the woman painted small cameos, aware of real perspectives, whereas the men were painters of a larger social scene, a panorama more affirmative and yelping about society rather than concentrating on the subjective scene.

Martin mentions the fascicles briefly (p. 144), coming down on the side of the organicists. Martin sees the fascicles as an attempt to create an organic mode for the presentation of her poems. The word fascicles is a botanical term referring to a flower pattern in which the petals spring irregularly from the top of a main stem, like a peony. So Dickinson chose an appropriate form for the blossoming of her poems: each poem was a petal, each packet a flower. M.L. Rosenthal, William Shurr, Ruth Miller, and Martha O'Keefe (the list will be endless) are supported once again.

Poem 822, the single Hound poem, beginning "This consciousness that is aware," is the prime example of a focus on consciousness and awareness between birth and death, not on the ultimate destiny of heaven or hell. Religion, Christ, and salvation play a secondary role for Dickinson, altho her metaphors are religious throughout her poetry. They can best be seen as analogies. Martin goes so far to claim that there were no religious for ED, or any interest in the Transcendental postulates, such as God, immortality, and freedom of the will! This strikes the reviewer as dogmatic, not considering the many religious poems of Dickinson. An endnote (addendum) on Albert Gelpi's 1965 book is probably truer, placing Dickinson in this religious tradition: Bradford, Winthrop and Edwards; Emerson and Dickinson; T.S. Eliot and Frost.

Dickinson is seen as a nightowl, working mainly at night on her work basket which may have had snippets put into it all day but were polished at night. Martin claims this was one of the few times she outwitted her father, gradually winning the right to sleep most of the morning, while Lavinia did the housework. Another aspect is her reading many books that Edward felt would boggle her mind: some of the best Victorian literature, such as by George Eliot and Dickens. Her rebellion was mainly domestic. The house became her frontier because it allowed her the freedom to explore her identity and to write about the same. Decades of this program allowed her to probe as deep as Freud and Shakespeare. (Harold Bloom has recently made a trio of these names in an introduction to his new Chelsea House anthology of ED essays. To be reviewed soon.)

Martin pays tribute in endnotes to two younger scholars, Sandra Gilbert and Lois Cuddy. Gilbert in the MAD-WOMAN IN THE ATTIC (p. 617) suggests that Dickinson's celibacy signifies power instead of weakness and represents the boon of "androgynous wholeness, autonomy, self-sufficiency." Cuddy has two Latin articles cited. They are "The Influence of Latin Poetics on ED's Style," COMPARATIVE LITERATURE STUDIES 13 (September 1976): 214-29, and in "The Latin Imprint of Dickinson's Poetry: theory and practice," AMERICAN LITERATURE 50 (March 1978): 74-78. Many of the inversions, and perhaps ellipses, were taken directly from Dickinson's Latin studies.

It is unfortunate DICKINSON STUDIES cannot delve as deeply into the other two poets of the TRIPPTYCH. Suffice it to say that the lives and works of Bradstreet and Rich are fully covered and worth study. Bradstreet lived in fear of publishing anything because of two of her friends being exiled from the community of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: her sister Sarah Dudley for preaching and Anne Hutchison for conducting private classes of antinomianism, undermining male supremacy, it was decreed. Bradstreet's father and husband had been governors of the Colony, so she was close to the fire and did not want to be consumed.

Rich, of course, has been much bolder. Leaving her husband and three sons, aged 15, 13, and 11, Rich at 41 was stunned later by her husband's suicide that year, 1970. Still she has gone on to numerous poetry awards, including the National Book Award of 1973, which she accepted in the name of two black nominees for the award. Together Alice Walker, Audre Lord, and Rich wrote an acceptance speech in the name of the radical lesbian community. It would be interesting to have the moderate Betty Friedan interview this trio, As Friedan did Simone de Beauvoir, Indira Gandhi, and the Pope, all stunning interviews. See IT CHANGED MY LIFE by Friedan (1975; also reviewed in this issue).

Having praised Martin generally throughout this review, there needs be a summary listing of her weaknesses. They are minor overall but irritating to the connoisseur. Her overloaded style uses double and triple complements at times, like a Gilbert and Sullivan patter song. (See addendum attached here from p. 131 on Dickinson's poetic vision.) She is contradictory on a few points, such as Dickinson and polarities: did she or did she not synthesize them into a mystic day? She is dogmatic occasionally on matters such as Dickinson's non-religious stance. It may be one of her polarities,

but the other pole is quite religious in dozens of poems. She is repetitious on matters such as Transcendentalism, polarities, and religion. The poem citations are too involved: besides the Johnson number, the volume and page of the Harvard edition are also cited each time. Finally MacGregor Jenkins was not Dickinson's gardener, but a playmate of her niece Mattie. The little boy was told to take flowers home to his mother. All in all, an excellent, original book, taking a decade to write. Don't miss it.

ADDENDA

1 By creating and safeguarding her privacy, [ED] made extraordinary discoveries unusual for anyone in the nineteenth century. Not only did she pierce the mystifications of evangelical Christianity as well as the mystique of redemptive femininity, but she also achieved a resolution of the mind/body dualism that prefigures twentieth-century scientific findings. Most important, she evolved a complicated understanding of emotional dynamics that is startlingly modern.—from Introduction, p. 81.

2 As a modern woman, Adrienne Rich's life has encompassed an unusual range of experiences....She has been a Radcliffe undergraduate, a wife and the mother of three sons, a widely read poet with a large audience who has received numerous awards, including the National Book Award, a university professor, a social activist, a war resister, a feminist, and a lesbian.—p. 171.

3 Elaborating her vision, Rich brings a nurturing ethos to her analysis of social priorities:

I simply believe that human society is capable of meeting the fundamental needs of all human beings: we can give them a minimum standard of living, we can give them an education, we can create an environment which is more healthy to live in, and we can give people free medical care. We can provide these things for everybody in the society. We're not doing it, and I don't think there is any male system that is going to do that.—Taped Conversations with Wendy Martin, 1978. first page of Chapter Fifteen.

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5 Rich writes in "Hunger" (1974--75), "I'm alive to want more than life, want it for others starving and unborn" (in THE DREAM OF A COMMON LANGUAGE, p. 14). Anne Bradstreet ultimately saw heaven as her home; Dickinson thought that her home WAS paradise; Rich has tried to envision a society in which all women can be at home.--p. 234

[It is thought Col. Higginson, as well as Eleanor Roosevelt, Bishop Tutu, and Martin Luther King, would subscribe to these efforts of Rich, truly a remarkable explorer. Typing this on King's birthday, which is the 18th anniversary of Dick-Higginson Press/Society, is a happy feeling.]

The Women's Movement

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These four books could constitute the Bible of the U.S. women's movement. De Beauvoir's reference book is the cornerstone, worldwide. Friedan's three books build on each other, showing a first and second stage during the two decades of her writing.

Simone de Beauvoir, life companion of Jean Paul Sartre, published her detailed study of the history of women in France soon after WW II. It is labored and in more detail than most readers are willing to absorb, but for a scholar it is a mine of information, both in myth and fact. History and politics are footnoted heavily.

Betty Friedan pays tribute to de Beauvoir's book and even interviews her in her middle book. She wrote THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE as a counterpart to the French book, but on a popular level and achieved a wider readership. The book became a classic, being used as a text in college both for the women's studies as well as in great books courses. It sparked the women's movement in the U.S.A., led to Friedan's forming NOW, being the first president for a number of years, founding the first Women's Bank, and similar activities.

Twelve years after her first book, Friedan published a collection of her fugitive pieces written inbetween. The first part consisted largely of thank-you messages from women, who wrote that the first book "changed my life." These fulsome tributes become lifeless and boring soon enough, especially to someone whose consciousness has already been raised. The NOW section is more interesting, serving as a history of the purposes, the ERA

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effort, regional and world conferences. The highlight of the book, to this reviewer, was the first three interviews in the last section: Indira Gandhi, the Pope, and Simone de Beauvoir were interviewed to good effect. Dialog form permits the personality of all persons to come alive.

The third book describes the second stage of women's liberation, which must go beyond ERA, equal pay, affirmative action, and the like. Confrontation and consciousness raising were necessary, according to Friedan, in the 1960s, but the time has come for a stage of mutual understanding and activity in the home: both the husband and wife should work outside and within the home ideally. If men cannot be persuaded of the justice of the women's movement, it will probably slip back into ineffectiveness, as it did in the 1920s after women's suffrage was achieved.

Friedan has changed her position boldly over the years. She always was a moderate, never a radical. She accepted all shades of the movement, including the lesbian; when she saw the power unleashed by the women's movement she became slightly afraid of it, realizing that backlash could develop equally if women pushed too hard. She does not care for Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem, or Kate Millett especially, because of their dominant, radical positions. Probably the same for Adrienne Rich, Alice Walker, and Audre Lord, the younger upfront lesbians, who have devoted years of service to the women's community. It would be interesting for Friedan to interview all these women, because they have much in common.

Friedan has much in common with Adrienne Rich. Both women are divorced, after having raised three children and then been attracted to the women's movement. Mr. Rich committed suicide in 1970, the same year of his unwanted divorce. Mr. Friedan is still alive, apparently, but Friedan has a bitterness anytime she mentions her husband after the divorce. Both women became radical feminists for a time, swinging as far toward independence as they could go. Friedan, however, has returned to a medium position, maintaining that women may and should have both a family and a job.

What remains for each woman will be interesting to observe. Like Simone de Beauvoir (now in her 80s), they are a single piece of cloth, true to their belief and its system of change, each with the power, courage, and wisdom to write about it.

TWIN BOOKS

Linda Simon. THE BIOGRAPHY OF ALICE B. TOKLAS. New York: Avon Books, 1978. 407 pp.

Gertrude Stein. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ALICE B. TOKLAS. New York: Vintage Books (Division of Random House), 1933 originally. 252 pp.

* * * * *

Thomas Costain. THE THREE EDWARDS. New York: Doubleday, 1958 originally. 480 pp.

Christopher Marlowe. EDWARD THE SECOND, a play in CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, Mermaid Series, Havelock Ellis, ed. with introduction by John A. Symonds. London: Vizetelly & Co., 1887. 430 pp. A rare book.

All four of these books are interesting, but the worth doubles when they are read in pairs. Let us take them in order. Linda Simon and Gertrude Stein have both ostensibly written about the same person, Alice Toklas, but with what a difference! Ms. Simon has the advantage over Gertrude Stein, 45 years later, of being able to complete the life of Toklas. Stein, in effect, wrote only the first half of Toklas' life; moreover, the principal character in Stein's book was Stein. There were a series of chapters dealing with the childhood of Gertrude, as well as that of Alice, then the bulk of the book on their life together. Despite the ploy of having all thoughts emanate from the brain of Alice, it is the mind of Gertrude that is guiding everything, even down to what Gertrude is thinking. The style is that of Samuel Richardson, the first English novelist (one of Gertrude's heroes), repetitious to the point of zeroing in frequently to what the auxiliary of each verb should be. The accuracy can be stimulating in philosophy and mathematical theory, but in the everyday life of a person—bah, humbug!

Simon has both more objectivity and humor in dealing with Alice. She sees her as the grand dame of the establishment, tending to Gertrude's needs for decades, but insisting on certain points and procedures in running the house. Both seemed zany to many people, but their daily schedule and ultimate goals were demanding and well regulated. Neither could have lasted as long nor accomplished so much without the other. Alice, for example, read French fluently: Flaubert, Balzac—much as Alice James did. Gertrude stuck to English, even to reading the newspapers.

Simon makes the point that Gertrude did not want to write the AUTOBIOGRAPHY, but acceded because of relative poverty. It became the book that made Gertrude famous, put her on the lecture circuit in the U.S.A.; still it is unlike her typical style, as in the Virgil Thomson operas, with her libretti. Simon makes use of the Stein book, but goes far beyond it in family research. For instance, the breakup of the Gertrude--Leo household because of Alice's moving in. Gertrude simply states that Leo moved to Italy, but there were severe mixed feelings when the duo became a trio temporarily.

Gertrude wrote a classic which Simon has amplified in several directions. Without the Stein impetus, there would have been no Simon followup, certainly. Toklas by herself was not that important or commanding a figure. Still, readers can be thankful to have two versions of the life of this shy, self-effacing person, who could be adamant as hell when she sensed her kingdom being encroached on, from outside: Mabel Dodge Luhan and others. It is better to read the Simon book first for the full picture; then the Stein book lets one see the basic structure, the unique style, and the deceits scattered thruout the original book.

* * * * *

The other twin books are similar overall. Thomas Coss-tain covers the entire life of Edward II, as well as his father and son. The three reigns covered a century (the 14th mostly) of the Plantagenet dynasty. Edward the Second fits as a valley between the towering careers of his father and son. He was gay—bisexual is a better word, inasmuch as he married Queen Isabella and was the father of Edward III. His major amatory interests were gay, however, with two lovers at either end of his twenty year reign. Gaveston and Despains (Spenser in the Marlowe version) are showered with gifts of clothing, jewels, a dukedom each, and almost empty the British treasury. The lords and the Queen put up with this an inordinately long time. At last she escapes to France with Mortimer from the Tower of London. There in Paris they organize a campaign to seize the throne for Edward III. Their landing party is small, but the English populace flock to their banner, so Edward II has few soldiers to defend him and is fairly easily buffeted around the country, imprisoned in a castle at the last. His gradual downfall becomes pitiful, like that of Richard II in Shakespeare's play.

Christopher Marlowe condenses the years and the cast to a small stage. The blank verse makes everyone sound the same. Still his play is a distillation of the larger Costain book, amazingly true to the record. Isabella is the only woman left in the earlier version: daughters, cousins, sisters, and other royalty are not named in the Marlowe version, altho there are women on stage in the court.

If one could not read all four of these books, it might be best to read only the two historical ones and leave the two literary ones alone. Linda Simon and Thomas Costain have done considerable research and are as impartial as possible. Stein and Marlowe are literary stars who have condensed and compressed their subjects almost beyond recognition. Three dimensions are always better in reading than two—or one.

'Radical Dualism': Emily Dickinson
and Margaret Fuller

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In a fragment surviving from one of her journals, Margaret Fuller wrote:

Woman is the flower, man the bee. She sighs out
melodious fragrance and invites the winged laborer.
He drains her cup and carries off the honey. She
dies on the stalk; he returns to the hive, well fed, and
praised as an active member of the community.¹

Fuller, the author of *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY* (1845) editor of *THE DIAL*, and friend of Emerson, Thoreau, and other influential Transcendentalists of her day, writes of a central concern in her life: what the role of woman is to be. Altho Emily Dickinson could not have read her journals, and indeed no evidence exists that Dickinson ever read any of Fuller's writings, the flower and bee imagery of this journal entry permeates much of ED's poetry. Apart from this imagery, however, other connections between the two women exist: their intellectual intensity, their friendship with Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and more important, their confrontation with the rigidly masculine world of the 19th century. Fuller, struggling with the confusion created by her liberating education and her restricted life as a woman, tried to reconcile her masculine energy with her feminine passivity by advocating a blending of masculine and feminine characteristics. As she observed in *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY*:

Male and female represent the two sides of the great radical dualism. But in fact, they are perpetually passing into one another. Fluid hardens to solid, solid rushes to fluid. There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman.²

A few pages later, she explains that "should these faculties have free play, I believe they will open new, deeper and purer sources of joyous inspiration than have as yet refreshed the earth."³ Echoing these lines in her journal, Fuller confided, "The woman in

me kneels and weeps in tender rapture; the man in me rushed forth but only to be baffled. Yet the time will come, when from the union of this tragic king and queen, shall be born a radiant sovereign self.”⁴ In these passages, Fuller, perhaps more than any other thinker of the mid-nineteenth century, realized that men and women are imprisoned by rigid sexual roles.

Born in 1830 when Margaret Fuller was already a full participant in the glittering literary society of Cambridge, Emily Dickinson was, from an early age, a very different kind of personality. Dickinson reported her education tersely to Higginson in 1862: “I went to school—but in your manner of the phrase—had no education.”⁵ This comment is characteristic of Dickinson’s ambiguity; she did not have the education that a man like Higginson had available in his “manner of the phrase,” but as Richard B. Sewall records, Edward Dickinson was concerned about his children’s education, and Emily was sent to a primary school, to Amherst Academy, and for a year to Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary.⁶ Her education was clearly a good one for a girl of her day, but not exceptionally so. Margaret Fuller’s education, of course, is a very different story. Timothy Fuller, strongly influenced by Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN*(1792), gave Fuller an education that rivaled that of John Stuart Mill: Latin, Greek, mathematics, the natural sciences, history, and literature—all before the age of twenty.⁷ Fuller’s education, altho far less formal than Dickinson’s, was intense, rigorous, and left her feeling socially and intellectually isolated from other women. Both Dickinson and Fuller, however, received educations that were considerably superior to the standard of education thought to be desirable for women in the nineteenth century.

Temperamentally, the two women were extreme opposites. Fuller was vivacious, somewhat flirtatious with Emerson and even Nathaniel Hawthorne, actively sought literary and social contacts, and was often a guest in the home of Thomas Wentworth Higginson’s parents.⁸ On the other hand, Emily Dickinson turned down every one of Higginson’s repeated invitations to meet members of his wide circle of literary friends. Altho Dickinson was hardly the nun of Amherst in her girlhood, she certainly did not possess the lively, outgoing personality of the adult Margaret Fuller.

In literary ability, the two women were also quite different. Margaret Fuller aspired to poetry but was capable only of pedestrian, sentimental verses. After some initial experiments with

imaginative literature, she stayed away from fiction as well as poetry and wrote about reality, what Ann Douglas refers to as masculine reality.⁹ Dickinson, however, wrote only poems and letters, and to our knowledge, never experimented with criticism, reviews or essays. In spite of these differences, a central similarity remains. Isolated as women writers in a largely male-dominated society, both Fuller and Dickinson explored the untapped possibilities for men and women. Fuller critically examined these possibilities in *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY* and challenged American society to reconsider the roles of both men and women:

The growth of Man is two-fold, masculine
and feminine.

So far as these two methods can be distinguished
they are so as

Energy and Harmony:

Power and Beauty;

Intellect and Love;

or by some such rude classification; for we have not language primitive and pure enough to express such ideas with precision.

These two sides are supposed to be expressed in Man
and Woman, that is, as the lore and the less, for
the faculties have not been given pure to either, but
only in preponderance.

And, a few lines later:

There cannot be a doubt that, if these two developments were in perfect harmony, they would correspond to and fulfill one another, like hemispheres, or the tenor and bass in music.

But there is no perfect harmony in human nature
and the two parts answer one another only now
and then; or, if there be a persistent consonance,
it can only be traced at long intervals, instead of
discoursing an obvious melody.¹⁰

Fuller's message is clear. Only by blending masculine and feminine characteristics can women be free and men as well. Miranda, Fuller's ideal young woman who is presented as a model of such a blending in *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY*, holds the promise that Fuller saw for the future of men and women in American society. Dickinson, capable of meeting Fuller's challenge

that there is not a "language primitive and pure enough to express such ideas with precision" offers a very different method and treatment of lasculine and feminine roles.

Unlike Fuller, with her fervid hopes for immediate social reforms, Dickinson was apparently unconcerned with the many reform movements of her day. Sewall comments that:

Save for a few poignant references, it is characteristic that, in her letters to Higginson, she all but ignored the stirring events of the time and said nothing at all about the great national causes with which he had for years been publicly identified—abolition, women's rights, the plight of the Northern poor. Long before the spring of 1862, his name had appeared frequently in the SPRINGFIELD REPUBLICAN in connection with such matters; she could hardly have helped reading about him, and them.¹¹

In the midst of the changing status of women in the nineteenth century and the increasing agitation for women's rights (the Seneca Falls Women's Suffrage Meeting had taken place in 1848), Dickinson was obviously aware of the restricted role for women in her time. But at the same time, another strong influence was current. Books such as GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK were enormously popular with their clear depiction of home and hearth as the proper domain of women. In *THE BONDS OF WOMANHOOD*, Nancy Cott explains that by the 1830s:

an emphatic sentence of domesticity was pronounced for women. Both male and female authors...created a new popular literature, consisting of advice books, sermons, novels, essays, satires, and poems, advocating and reiterating women's certain limited role. That was to be wives and mothers, to nurture and maintain their families, to provide religious example and inspiration, and to affect the world around by exercising private moral influence. The literature of domesticity promulgated a Janus-faced conception of women's roles: it looked back, explicitly conservative in its attachment to a traditional understanding of women's place; while it proposed transforming, even millenial results.¹²

Thus, two separate strands of thinking about women coexisted uneasily in the mid-nineteenth century: a strengthening conviction that women should be equal and independent juxtaposed with the traditional conviction that women should be subordinate and dependent.

The ideas inculcated in popular literature must have been familiar to Dickinson thru her reading of newspapers and journals. This background of the two positions on women's roles—that of restricted domestic and that of free human being—is important to our understanding of how Dickinson attempted to deal with the question of what a woman's role in society is to be. Like Fuller before her, Dickinson, too intelligent to settle simply for a life of polishing her manners and her silver, speculated from an early age on what that role might be. In an often-quoted letter to Susan Gilbert in June of 1852, Dickinson concerns herself at age twenty-two with the possibilities of the role of wife:

Those unions, my dear Susie, by which two lives are one,
this sweet and strange adoption wherein we can but look
and are not yet admitted, how it can fill the heart, and
make it gang wildly beating, how it will take US one day,
and make us all it's own, and we shall not run away
from it, but lie still and be happy!

You and I have been strangely silent upon this subject,
Susie, we have often touched upon it, and as quickly
fled away, as children shut their eyes when the sun is
too bright for them.

And later how dull our lives must seem to the bride,
and the plighted maiden, whose days are fed with gold,
and who gathers pearls every evening; but to the WIFE,
Susie, sometimes the WIFE FORGOTTEN, our lives
perhaps seem dearer than all others in the world; you
have seen flowers at morning, SATISFIED with the dew,
and those same sweet flowers at noon with their heads
bowed in anguish before the mighty sun; think you these
thirsty blossoms will now need naught but—dew? No,
they will cry for sunlight, and pine for the burning noon,
tho' it scorches them, scathes them; they have got thru
with peace—they know that the man of noon, is MIGHTIER
than the morning and their life is henceforth to him.
Oh, Susie, it is dangerous and it is all too dear, these
simple trusting spirits, and the spirit mightier which we

cannot resist! It does so rend me, Susie, the thought of it when it comes, that I tremble lest at sometime I, too, am yielded up.¹³

The striking features of this letter have been variously interpreted, most notably by Joanne V. Dobson who sees the letter as indicative of Emily Dickinson's fear of "having the self annihilated by the masculine."¹⁴ But the sentimentality of Dickinson's idealization of marriage is also clear; there is, after all, the image of the plighted maiden "whose days are fed with gold, and who gathers pearls every evening," an image that could well have been taken from the sentimental pages of *GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK* and is most certainly the romantic fantasy of a young woman speculating about what it must be like to be almost a wife. But "it is dangerous" as well, and the woman as the abandoned flower recalls Margaret Fuller's earlier portrayal. In this letter, mixed as it is with the confused feelings of a young woman, there is also a concern, even a fear of being a "wife forgotten," a woman who is fixed and waiting as a flower, subject to the vagaries of the sun, or as in Fuller's journal, to a bee. These early speculations of Dickinson's on the role of a wife show both her romanticized notions of wifehood as well as her concern that she might be "yielded up." In this letter, Dickinson is squarely contemporary with the transitional thinking about a woman's role. In a society where the central goal of a woman was to be a wife and then a mother, and indeed the most important day in a girl's life was thought to be her wedding day, Dickinson feels at age twenty-two not ready to be "yielded up" and begins to consider the possibilities that exist for a woman as a wife.

Dickinson wrote six poems in which a wife's role is central and nine poems in which a housewife is used as a metaphor for a secondary, even menial, comparison for some larger concern.¹⁵ These poems probably do not compose a group or even fit into any particular chronology, but they are thematically related. Unlike Margaret Fuller who outlined a detailed picture of the ideal marriage in *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY* as an "intellectual companionship,"¹⁶ Dickinson comes to no such sharp-featured portrayal. In each of these fifteen poems, Dickinson instead explores the definition of a wife as a particular role for a woman, sometimes clearly influenced by the cult of demesticity and sentimentality and sometimes clearly influenced by revolutionary ideas about a wife's function. Her preoccupation in these poems, altho necessarily from the perspective of a woman poet, surpasses her gender. For Dickinson, in the same way as Fuller, is clearly concerned with the traditional but restricted roles

of men and women, husbands and wives, and suggests an androgynous compromise that is her own brand of Fuller's "radical dualism" in which both women and men benefit. From her second-story window, Dickinson was an observer, and as has often been observed, takes on the persona of characters, at times as dramatically as the personae of Robert Browning, one of her favorite poets. Possessed of the language "primitive and pure enough" that Margaret Fuller lacked, Dickinson dramatizes the possibilities for woman as wife and ultimately suggests that wifehood may not be the desired state for all women unless society can determine some different expectations, that is, the "great radical dualism."

Before such a dualism can be reached, however, some points about traditional roles for women as wives and housewives must be made, and in Dickinson's poems that use "housewife" as an image, such points are clear. Typical nineteenth-century notions of how

women should occupy their time included serving men and children and caring for the sick. Dickinson not only spent a good part of her life playing both roles but also owned a copy of Coventry Patmore's *THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE*, an enormously popular poem that described clearly these roles for women. In poems where Dickinson uses the image of a housewife, she frequently conveys a sense of diminished importance that contradicts the ethereal position Patmore wished women to occupy.

In Poem 187, "How many times these low feet staggered," Dickinson depicts a dead housewife and asks the reader to examine the corpse of this "Indolent Housewife."¹⁷ Now that the housewife is dead, a fly buzzes unchecked in the window, the sun shines thru a dirty window, and a cobweb is "Fearless" because no housewife's housewife exists to dislodge it. The implication is that the housewife's duties are minor and unimportant; her accomplishments have to do with the mundane details of housekeeping, homely, traditional, and routine duties. The tone is ironic; the "adamantine" fingers are quiet. The word "adamantine" recalls the "adamantine" chains which bound Satan to the burning lake of Hell in *PARADISE LOST*. Certainly the housewife depicted here with her unimportant duties undone has none of the grandeur of even a fallen angel and certainly none of the ethereal quality of Patmore's angel in the house.

In a similar way, Poem 154, "Except to Heaven, she is nought," diminishes the housewife as small and unimportant. The housewife of this poem is like the Lucy of Wordsworth's "She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways": "A violet by a mossy stone/ Half hidden from the eye!/ Fair as a star, when only one/ Is shining in the sky."¹⁸

As obscure as Lucy, Dickinson's housewife is "Unnoticed as a single dew/ That on the Acre lies" (p. 72). This housewife, indeed, in this poem, Dickinson seems to be indulging in the romantic speculations about wifehood that permeated that early letter to Susan Gilbert.

Speaking in a more ironic vein, the poet in Poem 199 describes the "soft Eclipse" (p. 94) between the girl's life and the wife's life. The "Eclipse" suggests two spheres of life passing in front of one another. Carl N. Degler suggests that the sharp division between the roles of husband and wife were called the "doctrine of the two spheres, or separate spheres."¹⁹ Just as women and men occupied separate spheres, so did girls and wives. Within the sphere of the girl's life is pain and earthly concerns, while within the sphere of the wife's life is comfort and Heaven, recalling the early letter to Susan Gilbert again in which the almost-wife is "fed with gold." This sentimental view, however, is ironically undercut in the complicated comparison at work. The use of the "Eclipse" implies a cutting off of the sun, possibly the sunlight of a confused state of thinking about the role of the wife. Finishing "That other state," the state of being a girl, is not necessarily desirable. In this poem, which ends abruptly with the poet suggesting that further comparisons might be unwise, being a wife may mean being static and unchanging, being concerned perhaps with the housewifely duties described in other poems.

Leaving gender aside for a moment, to take on the role of a wife with the limitations implicit in the nineteenth century also meant to take on limitations on artistic endeavor and achievement. While certainly one thinks of Jane Austen writing on a small table in the family home at Chawton, always ready to hide her work when some family member came in to demand her attention, one can also think of writers like Edgar Allan Poe who wrote flattering literary biographies for GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK to earn enough money

for firewood for his dying wife while he could concentrate fully on his more important work; of Nathaniel Hawthorne whose work as a consul in Liverpool led him to produce only one novel, THE MARBLE FAUN during his seven years in Europe. Roles that seriously limit and circumscribe a writer's work are not gender-specific; Dickinson, who clearly chose to live a life apart, was able to avoid a role that would too closely limit her time. The role of the wife then may be expanded to include any role that chokes artistic endeavor. But it is the wife that Dickinson continually returns to as her special image of the circumscribed life.

In Poem 1072, "Title divine—is mine!," the poet has achieved the longed-for wife status; Dickinson has posed as a wife in order to try out the fit of the title. But the title is worn uneasily. For a woman is "Born—Bridalled—Shrouded—/ In a day—" (P. 487), and the implication is that birth, marriage, and death is all that a woman

who become a wife has. The final line of the poem, "Is THIS—the way?" is poignant, suggesting that the conferring of the title of wife may not be enough and indeed cannot be enough.

In Poem 732, "She rose to His Requirement—dropt," Dickinson writes of another wife, this time in the third person, and looks at the woman who "dropt/ The Playthings of Her Life" (P. 359). This poem suggests that the woman who marries becomes a wife and must leave other occupations behind, whether they are the playthings of this poem or the pain of Poem 199. As Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have pointed out, Dickinson much admired WUTHERING HEIGHTS and could not have helped but notice the sad transformation that Catherine Earnshaw undergoes in becoming Mrs. Edward Linton.²⁰ Altho not so enthusiastic an admirer of George Eliot as she was of Emily Bronte, Dickinson did read DANIEL DERONDA and watched the tragic ending of Gwendolyn Harleth's alteration from happy, carefree girl to miserable, ultimately forsaken wife and woman. Of course, closer to home, the tensions of the marriage between Susan Gilbert and Austin Dickinson was perhaps already beginning to show in the mid-1860s.²¹ To be a wife for Dickinson was clearly not an unclouded occasion for joy. Dickinson's view of wifehood is not optimistic and exalted; on the contrary, she seems to have viewed wifehood as being an obstacle for a woman to do the creative work of "Amplitude, or Awe—" (Poem 732, p. 359).

Finally, an undated poem, no. 1737, "Rearrange a 'Wife's' affection!", may be Dickinson's most explicit statement about the nature of wifehood. In this poem, the narrator asks for a metaphoric surgery to rearrange her affection, dislocate her brain, amputate her

freckled bosom, and make her bearded like a man. She asks all these in a spirit of expectancy and secrecy. Sandra Gilbert has suggested that the "speaker's secret is a bandaged WOUND," which is a metaphor for "aesthetic redemption born of pain, bandaged in myth born of mystery."²² The redemption, however, may also be not aesthetic but sexual. This poem is not about a simple and literal wish to be a man, but it is rather a part of a larger, androgynous vision that is a part of poems like 249, "Wild Nights—Wild Nights." Here Dickinson poses as both male and female, reechoing Margaret Fuller's call for less stereotyped roles for men and women and consequently

for a new, radical dualism. Not particularly concerned with the social issue Fuller had in mind, Dickinson nonetheless rejects the restricted role of the wife and woman in the way that Fuller had decades before when she said in a letter to Emerson: "I love best to be a woman; but womanhood is at present too straitly--bounded to give me scope."²³

Rejecting the circumscribed steps of ballet in Poem 326, rejecting the rising to another's requirement in Poem 732, Dickinson's poems about housewives and wives reflect contemporary notions about women's roles and the changes that were taking place in the nineteenth century. However, Dickinson also seems concerned with limitations on the artist—whether male or female—and in this way, to read her poems as simply statements about women's concerns would be to underestimate the possible worlds for men and women which she portrays with "a language primitive and pure enough to express such ideas with precision."

ENDNOTES

- 1 Margaret Fuller, *LIFE WITHOUT AND LIFE WITHIN* (1860; rpt. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Gregg, 1970), p. 349.
- 2 Margaret Fuller, *WOMAN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY* (New York, 1971), pp. 115-116.
- 3 Fuller, *WOMAN*, p. 117.
- 4 R.W. Emerson, W.H. Channing, J.F. Clarke *THE MEMOIRS OF MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI*, II (1884; rpt. New York: Burt Franklin, 1972), 136.
- 5 "To T.W. Higginson," 25 April 1862, Letter 261, *THE LETTERS OF EMILY DICKINSON*, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), II, 404.
- 6 Richard B. Sewall, *THE LIFE OF EMILY DICKINSON* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974), II, 337.
- 7 Margaret Vanderhaar Allen, *THE ACHIEVEMENT OF MARGARET FULLER* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1979), p. 2.
- 8 James W. Tuttleton, *THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1978), p. 14.
- 9 Ann Douglas, *THE FEMINIZATION OF AMERICAN CULTURE* (New York: Knopf, 1977), p. 262.

- 10 Fuller, WOMAN, p. 169--170.
- 11 Sewall, II, 535.
- 12 Nancy Cott, THE BONDS OF WOMANHOOD (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 8.
- 13 "To Susan Gilbert (Dickinson)," June 1852, Letter 93, LETTERS, I, 209-10.
- 14 Joanne V. Dobson, "'Oh Susie, it is dangerous'" Emily Dickinson and the Archetype of the Masculine," in FEMINIST CRITICS READ EMILY DICKINSON, ed. Suzanne Juhasz (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1983), p. 83.
- 15 S.P. Rosenbaum, ed., A CONCORDANCE TO THE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1964). Rosenbaum lists the following poems using "housewife": 154, 187, 219, 640, 961, 589, 605, 74, and 511. The poems using "wife" are: 199, 230, 461, 732, 1072, and 1737.
- 16 Fuller, WOMAN, p. 73.
- 17 Thomas H. Johnson, Ed., THE COMPLETE POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON (Boston: Little, Brown, 1955), p. 88. Subsequent references are given in the text.
- 18 William Wordsworth, COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF WORDSWORTH (Boston: Riverside, 1904), p. 343.
- 19 Carl N. Degler, AT ODDS: WOMEN AND THE FAMILY IN AMERICA FROM THE REVOLUTION TO THE PRESENT (London: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 26.
- 20 Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, THE MADWOMAN IN THE ATTIC (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1979), p. 588.
- 21 Sewwell (I, 186) suggests that "The gossip began in earnest in the mid--1880's, but there were murmurings before then."
- 22 Sandra M. Gilbert, "The Wayward Nun Beneath the Hill," in FEMINIST CRITICS, p. 33.
- 23 Fuller, MEMOIRS' I, 297.

Three Notes by Dr. William White
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ED in Africa

When I visited Kenya in August 1985, I found in a Nairobi bookstore a 90-page paperback, PROSE AND POETRY UNSEENS: for certificate in English, by Rosina Umelo (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Education Limited, 1981, reprinted from 1976), printed in Hong Kong. A note on p. [ii] states that "The new Literature in English syllabus of the West African Examinations Council still lays great emphasis on the compulsory Unseen Prose and Poetry question," and "This book is intended as a text for students to use from the fourth form onwards [and thus] be well prepared to sit the 'O' Level examinations."

Of the 56 short pieces of prose and poetry in the book are selections by Thomas Hardy, A.E. Housman, Hilaire Belloc, E.M. Forster, Graham Greene, W.B. Yeats, William Wordsworth, Osbert Sitwell, among others. There are only two poems by Americans: Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and Emily Dickinson's "Ample make this bed."

The poem is No. 829 in Thomas H. Johnson's edition, but the spelling and punctuation indicate the version in the African textbook was taken from Emily Dickinson's POEMS: SECOND SERIES (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1891), p. 207, entitled "A Country Burial":

Ample make this bed.
 Make this bed with awe;
 In it wait till judgment break
 Excellent and fair.

Be its mattress straight,
 Be its pillow round;
 Let no sunrise yellow noise
 Interrupt this ground.

"Judgment" is spelled with an "e" and "sunrise" has no apostrophe in the version here. As for spelling, the poet's name is given as Emily Dickenson.

Following the text of the poem is this description: "This is a strangely disturbing poem which shows what effects can be obtained very economically using very plain words." The textbook includes these six questions for students: "1. What is this poem about? 2. Why do you think the poet did not give it a title? 3. What does the phrase 'make this bed' usually mean? What does it mean as used in this poem? 4. Suggest words or phrases that could be used instead of: ample, awe, judgement. 5. What do you understand by: a. sunrise yellow noise, b. interrupt this ground? [and] 6. What is the mood of this poem?"

Despite spelling the poet's name as Dickenson, it is a tribute to her that she should appear—with only one other American poet, Frost—in an anthology of English poetry to prepare students for West African examinations in English. This is further evidence, if indeed such is needed, of the enduring and permanent high regard abroad for Emily Dickinson.

Emily Dickinson in a Minor Key: two reprinted notes
(also by William White)

No admirer or collector of material by and about ED can read or even find everything that's written on her, especially in magazines and newspapers that are not widely circulated. Anyway, some of it really is not worth bothering with. However, here are two notes that readers of DICKINSON STUDIES (and HIGGINSON JOURNAL) may well have missed, and they seem interesting and unusual enough to be worth reprinting here.

The first one appeared in the AMHERST BULLETIN on 1 August 1984 under the heading of "A Look Back," by Daniel Lombardo. The news story is about Edwin Dwight March (1845-1913), an Amherst undertaker; and in searching thru his funeral accounts, Mr. Lombardo writes that the one that stands out from all the others is that of Emily Dickinson. The following is taken from his stroy:

"Contemporary accounts by mourners who attended describe the 'dainty, white casket...lifted by six Irish workmen... They carried her through the fields, full of buttercups, while the friends... followed on irregularly through the ferny footpaths to the little cemetery.' Thomas W. Higginson wrote that 'E.D.'s face (was) a wondrous restoration of youth—she is (55) and looked 30, not a gray hair or wrinkle, and perfect peace on the beautiful brow. There was a little bunch of violets at the neck... the sister Vinnie put in two heliotropes by her hand...'

"Marsh's account of the funeral states the cause of death as Bright's Disease, the certifying physician as Dr. Bigelow, and the date of burial as May 19, 1886. The length of the casket was 5' 6", a significant figure for estimating Emily's height. The white casket furnished with white flannel and white textile handles cost \$85. The average casket at that time was bought for between \$12 and \$35."

The second note, written by Norman R. Shapiro of Wesleyan University, is an untitled one which was published in VERBATIM: the language quarterly, in Summer 1984:

"All of us who are interested in the art and craft of translation have, I suppose, our personal chamber of horrors. Marcy S. Powell's article, 'Traduttore Traditore' [X,1], prompted me to revisit mine and to share with VERBATIM readers my own favorite traduzione/tradimento.

"It occurs in a 1957 anthology, in a Spanish translation of Emily Dickinson's 'I never saw a moor...', and is so deliciously logical in its inaccuracy that one can only stand in awe before the monumental misunderstanding. The translator—himself a well-respected Catalano-Mexican poet, whom charity and professional sympathy restrain me from identifying—encountered Dickinson's well-known lines 'I never saw a moor,/ I never saw the sea;/ Yet I know how the heather looks,/ And what a wave must be...' and confidently rendered them as follows (capital letters mine):

Jamas he visto a un SARRACENO
y jamas el mar contemplé.

Pero se comó es el PAGANO
y como la ola debe ser.

Clearly, our poet was misled by his misreading of 'heathen' for HEATHER (which he apparently took for a misprint), and by the logical relationship between this supposed 'heathen' ('PAGANO') and the MOOR ('SARRACENO'), a misreading all the easier to appreciate if we remember that, to a Hispanic, the spelling MOOR, with a capital, might well be thought to indicate nationality.

"The mistakes would be delightful if Dickinson weren't the loser. But thanks to our translator's treason—or treasons—the Belle of Amherst's poem rings false for Hispanophones."

[Also on the subject, read Professor Robert Fleissner's "Dickinson's 'Moor,'" DICKINSON STUDIES 34: 7-12 (1978).]

DENMARK

Pastor Niels Kjaer, of Denmark,... has published two books related to Emily Dickinson, the American poet who died in 1886. The first is a selection of Dickinson's poems in English accompanied by a Danish translation. The second is a selection of her letters, which like the poems have been translated into Danish by Pastor Kjaer. The books, the first called ELYSIUM and the second titled HESPERIDERNES SOMMER may be had for \$10.00 each, postpaid, or both for \$15. Order from: Sognepraest Niels Kjaer, Lyo Praestegaard, 5600 Faaborg, Denmark.

[the above is reprinted with permission from CHURCH AND LIFE, edited by Danish Interest Conference, U.S.A.]

ELYSIUM is the first book on ED to be published in Denmark. The two-page introduction by Rev. Kjaer is a good way to learn Danish. There are 30 poems and 5 quotations from her letters, on facing pages, bilingual. The other book, HESPERIDERNES SOMMER, contains 13 letters and 5 poems in those letters, selected by Kjaer and translated by him. 6 illus. Chronology of ED's life. Two page select bibliography in English. 47 numbered pp.

Kjaer is a priest with a parish on Lyo island, which is isolated in winter for several months. He has about 175 parishioners, a wife and two young daughters. He is a scholar on Soren Kierkegaard, a graduate of Aarhus University in Denmark, and is writing a comparative study of ED and Kierkegaard. In December of 1985, he issued the first number of ED INFORMATION, a ten-pageer celebrating the centennial of ED's deathyear. He mentions DICKINSON STUDIES frequently and aims at attracting new memberships in his vicinity of Europe. At present INFORMATION is distributed free to a select circle. Inquiries are welcome.

See address above.



AMERICAN LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP

Most ED scholars are acquainted with the annual ALS series which has improved dramatically in the two decades of its coverage. The biggest change has been the addition of European editors, plus a Japanese, for comment on their countries in depth. While doing research at the University of Maryland in the spring of 1984, I was able to find the following items, from Germany and Japan mainly. [ALS is published by Duke Univ., Durham, NC.]

The German editor is Prof.--Dr. Hans Galinsky, whose WEG-BEREITER (1968) compared W.C. Williams and ED. Year of publication is given for each of his comments:

(1979) Its sometimes obfuscating attention to detail notwithstanding, Roland Hagenbuechle's "New Developments in Dickinson Criticism (ANGLIA 97: 452--74) provides a useful review of major critical studies published during the last two decades. This essay, incidentally exemplifies the traditional preoccupation of Germanic scholars with linguistic studies of Dickinson and their more recent interest in how her poems may be taken to exhibit ABSENCE PRESENTE, instantaneous reversals of being and nothingness.



Sognepræst Niels Kjær,
Lyø, har gendigtet Emily
Dickinson



16. Lyø kirke. N. Kjær. Sengotisk kirke. Danmarks eneste cirkelrunde kirkegård. Åben fra kl. 7.30-18.00.

(1981) ED begins to benefit from women's studies and returning interest in transcendentalism. Dorothea Steiner's "Emily Dickinson: Image Patterns and the Female Imagination," in ARBEITEN AUS

ANGLISTIK UND AMERIKANISTIK 6: 57--71, may relate to the one, Gudrun Grabher's monograph to be reviewed in the comparative studies section surely does to the other. Steiner approaches "the female quality" of Dickinson's art from two angles, that "of the "poet" standing in the tradition of the "masters" who treat "the great themes of literature," and that of the "woman poet" stand[ing] at the beginning of a tradition...of those women who use the male tradition but modify it by adding their distinctive perspective, or voice." Its quality is found behind "several masks," of which Steiner distinguishes six. They extend from "portraying the woman in her dealings with Power, i.e. God, or an equivalent force" to a "playful attitude toward things." "Image patterns" are shown to correlate with these masks. They are thought to jointly "have a structural effect on Dickinson's poetry." Persuasively put, this broad overview deserves to be tested by interpretation of single complete poems from their phonic to their syntactic and semantic levels.

(1981) One encounters only one study which deals with a tri-national, American--German--Japanese relationship. Another places works of American literature in a frame of seven foreign literatures. Both of these demanding projects were accomplished by women scholars. Gudrun Grabher's EMILY DICKINSON: DAS TRAN-

ZENDENTALE ICH, AF 157 (Heidelberg: Winter) aims (1) to use German transcendental philosophy's concept of "the transcendental subject constituting his world" for a 'basis' on which to interpret the first-person-singular in Dickinson's poetry, (2) to define, 'in the framework of American--transcendentalism,' her 'place in the tradition of American literary history,' (3) to make her 'transcendental I,' in the context of East Asian philosophy, a starting point for a theory of lyrical poetry. The first two aims have been achieved. Judgment on the achievement of the third will have to be passed by experts on Zen--Buddhism and Matsue Basho's haikus, which Grabher adduced for comparison. A tri-national frame of reference is maintained as the hard core of her monograph.

[See DS 53, pp. 3--6 (1984) for another review of Grabher.]

Two other publications received from Germany are:

Hans Galinsky. Review of Ann Lilliedahl. EMILY DICKINSON IN EUROPE: her literary reputation in selected countries. Washington, DC suburb: University Press of America, 1981. vii, 214 pp. Reviewed in AMERICAN STUDIES, quarterly. Vol. 28, pp. [246]--248.

The favorable review of the Lilliedahl book shows that Europe is aware of this European survey published in the U.S.A. Besides giving chapters to France and the German-speaking countries of northern Europe, Lilliedahl presents a chapter of conclusion. This final part considers three aspects which appeal to Europeans: a cultural-psychological response, a celebration of the individual, and linguistic technique and style. Galinsky stresses the ABSENCE PRESENTE in ED's poetry as "the favorite stylistic term of the Symbolists as perhaps the aspect of Dickinson's linguistic mastery that is [in France] more often praised than any other."

The other item is by Franz H. Link. zwei amerikanische ZWEI AMERIKANISCHE DICHTERINNEN: Emily Dickinson and Hilda Doolittle. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1979. 110 pp. \$26. wrapper only. Vol. 2 in series, Schriften zur Literaturwissenschaft. (Plans are to review this book in DS 59, second half 1986.)

NORWAY

Sigmund Skard. TRANS—ATLANTICA: memoirs of a Norwegian Americanist. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1978. ISBN 82-00-052249. A publication of The American Institute, University of Oslo.

Sigmund Skard (born 1903) is Professor Emeritus of American Literature and founder of the American Institute at the University of Oslo, Norway. In the 1970s Prof. Skard was given honorary membership in the MLA as a worldwide celebrity in literature. He has published five major works (1944 to 1976) as well as published an anthology of American poetry in his own translation (1960) and seven volumes of his own poetry. Here is his story in TRANS—ATLANTICA about his discovery of ED (p. 68):

But it was natural that my mind was now turning westward again, 'indeed, in full flight already', to the new task awaiting me. I have my first popular lectures on the United States, to associations and over the radio. Above all,

I began reading American literature, to me an almost virgin field, which I approached 'filled with curiosity'. And the overture could not have been more promising.

In February I wrote my wife that I had been thru an exciting adventure: 'I Have discovered and experienced a new poet—that is, new to me—Emily Dickinson (you know the name). I had only read scattered poems from her hand before, and actually with small returns. I have now read a rich selection, and the storm was there. Many years have passed since a poet moved me so deeply. And it's blissful—almost like succeeding when you are writing yourself, only much more so because she's that much greater as a poet. To lie straight in bed with a book, in a mixture of sobs and tears and transports of joy—to have THIS encounter with an American spinster and village eccentric, dead after living in a den until 1886: yes, it is grand. She is one of the greatest and most original lyrical poets I have ever run into. I sang and conducted all of Mendelssohn's violin concerto afterwards, while dressing (good thing no psychiatrist saw me), and I am still in a general state of exaltation. To find myself still capable of such an experience, and a complicated and difficult one, as the direct result of the reading of a new author from afar away, strengthens my self--confidence and determination: THIS is going to be my real job, to experience such things, and to make others do the same. What a CHALLENGE!'

ITALIAN

A new anthology of 20th-century American poetry (texts and translations), ed. Sergio Perosa, is DA FROST A LOWELL:

poesia americana del '900 (Milano: Nuova Accademia). Each of the 46 poets, from E.A. Robinson to Richard Howard is represented by a few poems, a total of 165 in all, judiciously selected and on the whole faultlessly rendered into Italian. Rosella Mamoli Zorzi and Giovanni Zarmarchi, together with Perosa himself, are responsible for most of the work, including the detailed introductory note to each poet. Perosa also contributes an interesting introduction to the volume, outlining the historical development and contemporary trends of modern American poetry, which he sees as being conditioned by the models of ED's lyrical fragments and Walt Whitman's epic--dramatic poem.

PORTUGUESE

Two ED-related books have been published in Brasil in the 1980s, as follows:

Aila Gomes, ed. EMILY DICKINSON: uma centena de poemas. Sao Paulo: Editora da Universidade de S.P. T.A. Queiroz, Editor, 1985. 245 pp. Second edition also released, winning an important prize (Premio Jaboti). Further address: Rua Joaquim Floriano, 733-90, 04534 Sao Paulo, SP-BRASIL. Price: US \$7.00 a copy by surface mail; \$9.00 airmail.

This book is a joy to behold, with a yellow rose on the slick paperback cover. The hundred poems are arranged by the Johnson number, except for "This is my letter to the World" (Poem 441) which is placed at the end. The introduction of 25 pages is not hard for learning Portuguese, especially if one knows the facts of ED's life already.

Portuguese language has 407 poems of ED translated, according to the detailed survey of Professors Carlos Daglian and Rogerio Chociay, published in HIGGINSON JOURNAL 43 recently. The language is also well represented by studies. George Monteiro (1971) surveyed Brasil for ED works up to that date. See "Brasil's ED: an annotated checklist of translations, criticism, and reviews," EMILY DICKINSON BULLETIN 18 (Sept. 1971), 72-78. In 1985 Professors Daglian and Chociay listed all translations into Portuguese plus a bibliographical notice published in HJ 43 (second half 1985), pp. 3-13.

The second book is EMILY DICKINSON: ALGUMAS CARTAS (selected letters). Selected and translated by Rosaura Eichenberg; designed by Pedro Pires; one-page introduction by Cláuber Teixeira. Published in Ilha de Santa Catarina (Probably in Portugal or Brasil): Editora Noa Noa, August 1983. 550 copies only. 31 pp. in wrappers, paperback. Price unknown. Best place to inquire might be Gavea-Brown Publications, Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies, Box O, Brown Univ., Providence, RI 02912. This selection of ED letters to Col. Thomas Wentworth

Higginson may be compared to that of Professor John Mann in HJ 22 (1979). Whereas Mann limited himself to the first five letters she wrote, this edition contains twice as many over a much longer time. Mann has much more comment for each letter, but the Portuguese selections have a good coherence and are recommended.

Backfile

Of the ninety--four issues published by Higginson Press, there are 76 in print at present. The existing backfile may be purchased as a unit only for \$250.00 Discounts available for senior citizens or students.

The most recent purchasers of a backfile are:

Oxford University, England

Prof. Takao Furukawa, Japan

University of California, Irvine

Ms. Susanna Downie, Pittsburgh

Mrs. Carlton Lowenberg, Berkeley, Univ. Calif.

Prof. Dorothy Huff Oberhaus, Mercy College
and Sarah Lawrence
Joint University Libraries, Nashville,

Penn State University, Univ. Park

Ohio State University



S I G N O F

Dickinson—Higginson Press/Society

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,
Spirit after spirit! the smithies break the flood,
The golden smithies of the Emperor!
Marbles of the dancing floor
Break bitter furies of complexity,
Those images that yet
Fresh images beget,
That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea.

--final stanza from 'Byzantium' by Yeats